

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, OAU, ET, FT, SO, AG, MO, MR

SUBJECT: OAU: DIJBOUTI AND SAHARA ISSUES PASSED TO SUMMIT

REF: (A) PORT LOUIS 576, (B) ALGIERS 1681

SUMMARY: OAU COUNCIL OF MINISTERS (CM) FINISHED SECOND DAY OF EXTRA SESSIONS JULY 2 WITH CALL FOR MINISTERS TO RETURN AT MIDNIGHT TO PREPARE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SUMMIT. DURING THE DAY, THE CM APPROVED A DRAFT RESOLUTION ON DJIBOUTI SUBSTANTIALLY AS SUBMITTED BY ETHIOPIA. ALTHOUGH DELEGATES HAD BELIEVED THAT THE WESTERN SAHARA ISSUE HAD BEEN BURIED PREVIOUSLY, IT WAS RAISED IN THE PLENARY AND ONCE AGAIN HAS BECOME A VOLATILE AND POLITICALLY DIVISIVE ISSUE. THE PLENARY DECIDED TO PASS THE SAHARA QUESTION TO THE SUMMIT, AN ACTION WHICH CAUSED BOTH MOROCCAN AND MAURITANIAN FORMINS TO WALK OUT. END SUMMARY.

1. ETHIOPIAN REPRESENTATIVES AND TFAI GOVERNMENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT ALI AREF WERE ELATED THAT THE ETHIOPIAN DRAFT RESOLUTION ON THE TFAI WAS ACCEPTED BY THE CM SUBSTANTIALLY AS WRITTEN. RESOLUTION REAFFIRMS PREVIOUS UN AND KAMPALA
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RESOLUTIONS ASSURING DEMOCRACY, RECOGNITION AND RESPECT FOR

THE INDEPENDENCE AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF THE TFAI. THE RESOLUTION CALLS ON OAU MEMBERS TO RESPECT AND HONOR THE INDEPENDENCE. SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF THE TERRITORY AFTER INDEPENDENCE. AN ETHIOPIAN AMENDMENT ASKS THE RESPECTIVE GOVERNMENTS TO RENOUNCE ALL CLAIMS TO THE TFAI.

2. ETHIOPIAN MOFA AFRICAN AFFAIRS DIRECTOR BERHANU DINKA TOLD EMBOFF "WE HAVE WON EVERYTHING WE ASKED FOR." ALI AREF, IN A SEPARATE CONVERSATION, WAS ALSO WELL SATISFIED WITH THE RESOLUTION AS PASSED. THE SOMALI DELEGATE APPARENTLY TRIED TO GET THE FLOOR TO VOICE SOMALI RESERVATIONS BUT THE PLENARY CHAIRMAN TURNED A "BLIND EYE" AND THE DRAFT RESOLUTION WAS PASSED. IT IS QUITE PROBABLE, HOWEVER, THAT THE DJIBOUTI QUESTION WILL BE RE-OPENED DURING THE SUMMIT CONFERENCE, WHICH BEGINS IN EARNEST JULY 3.

3. AS NOTED IN REF B, BOTH MOROCCAN AND MAURITANIAN FORMINS WALKED OUT OF THE CM AFTER A CONFUSING SESSION LATE AFTERNOON JULY 2 IN WHICH ALGERIANS REINTRODUCED WESTERN SAHARA QUESTION. MAJORITY OF MEMBERS HAD BELIEVED WESTERN SAHARA WAS A DEAD ISSUE. HOWEVER, THE SECOND CM VICE PRESIDENT (ZAMBIA) ENTERTAINED AN ALGERIAN RESOLUTION REOPENING THE ISSUE. THERE WAS CONFUSION OVER WHETHER THE ALGERIAN STATEMENT WAS A MATTER OF SUBSTANCE OR A POINT OF ORDER, ALTHOUGH NO DISCUSSION WAS ALLOWED. THE ZAMBIAN RULED IT WAS A MATTER OF SUBSTANCE, A VOTE WAS TAKEN, AND WESTERN SAHARA WAS INCLUDED ON THE SUMMIT AGENDA. AT THAT POINT TWO FORMINS WALKED OUT. LATER, HOWEVER, BOTH MOROCCAN FORMIN LARAKI AND MAURITANIAN PRESIDENT OULD DADA ATTENDED SUMMIT OPENING. DELEGATIONS, THEREFORE, ARE LIKELY TO BE ATTENDING SUMMIT.

5. CM RESUMED FINAL DELIBERATIONS IN EARLY HOURS OF JULY 3 IN AN EFFORT TO DRAFT FINAL RESOLUTIONS TO PRESENT TO THE SUMMIT.
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